

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
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INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

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COUNTRY Lebanon

SUBJECT Struggle for Control of the
Labor Unions
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SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

1. Following the failure of the Typesetters' strike, scheduled for 21 November 1948, a number of communist typesetters, including Sa'd-al-Din Muninah, Fu'ad Nasir-al-Din, and Najib Shalhuh Habib Latif, met and discussed the Lebanese government's actions against the Communist Party, accusing the government of acting under the influence of "Anglo-American imperialists". In retaliation, these men decided to resort to violence and ordered a number of typesetters to destroy the printing presses of al-Telegraph, al-Yawm and al-Zaman as an example and a threat to the typesetters of other newspapers to induce them to join the proposed Typesetters' Union strike. The printing press of al-Telegraph was ordered destroyed because two of its typesetters are brothers of Tawfiq Faghali, leader of the anti-Communist typesetters. The presses of al-Yawm and al-Zaman were ordered destroyed because the typesetters of these papers are members of Faghali's Union.
2. The presses of al-Yawm and al-Zaman, however, were not destroyed because of previous police protection which had been obtained by their owners. Nasib Matni, editor of al-Telegraph, on the other hand, took no precautionary measures because he felt that his good relations with the Communists and his defense of them in his paper was sufficient protection. However, Matni's presses were thrown to the ground because of his refusal to support the strike unless other publishers would do the same.
3. On 24 and 25 November the Communists visited various printing presses and talked to the workers. The Communist Sections also held numerous meetings concerning preparations for a new Typesetters' strike to be followed by strikes of other Unions. The Communist Party also decided to launch an all-out campaign against Tawfiq Faghali, who now controls approximately half of Beirut's 652 typesetters. The Communists also attempted to lessen Faghali's influence by spreading rumors to the effect that Faghali is an agent of the Lebanese Surets and of the French Intelligence.

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4. On 27 November Tawfiq Faghali met with Richard Harfush, a senior employee of the Electric Company, and discussed the possibility of having the Electric Company's Workers' Union either leave the Federation of Unions (Ittihad al-'Ummal) to join Faghali's League of Unions (Jami'at al-'Ummal) or remain neutral in the struggle between the two. This suggestion was backed by Harfush and Pierre Sayigh, another company employee, as well as by Louis Sa'adeh, an influential member of the Electric Company's Workers' Union and a former member of that Union's Council who was interested in withdrawing from the Federation of Unions because the Communists had prevented his reelection to the Council of Electric Company's Workers' Union.
5. The non-Communist typesetters, representing a majority of typesetters of the most influential papers in Beirut, met on 28 November and elected the following officers for the newly-licensed Typesetters' and Bookbinders' Union:

Tawfiq Faghali	President. Works on <u>al-Amal</u> .
Muhammad Ali Fakhru	Vice-President. Works on <u>al-Kashshaf</u> .
Edmond Khuri	Secretary. Works on <u>al-Zaman</u> .
Kamil Abyad	Assistant Secretary. Works on <u>al-Kashshaf</u> .
Muhammad Maghribi	Treasurer. Works on <u>al-Kashshaf</u> .
Jean 'Awn	Assistant Treasurer. Works on <u>al-Hadith</u> .

The following were elected members of an advisory committee of this Union:

Jibrail Faghali	Of <u>al-Telegraph</u> (Jibrail is Tawfiq Faghali's brother).
Zakha Mudawwar	Of <u>al-Bayraq</u> .
Arif Jamal	Of <u>al-Yam</u> .
Ra'if Daghestani	Of <u>al-Ruwad</u> .
Farid Nujayyim	Of <u>al-Amal</u> .
Munir Jamal-al-Din	Of <u>al-Kashshaf</u> .

6. Provisions were made to add to the Council members of the newspapers Beirut and al-Nahar, as well as members of the Jesuit printing press. These members would be appointed during the term by the Constitutional Council.
7. The following is a list of unions belonging to the League of Unions, as of the end of November:

Mechanics' Union
 Pastry Workers' Union
 Vegetable Merchants' Workers' Union
 Sailors' and Port Workers' Union.
 Cinema Workers' Union
 Tobacconists' Union
 Private Drivers' Union
 Upholsterer's Union
 Needle Workers' Union
 Gasoline Dealers' Union
 Typesetters' and Bookbinders' Union

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8. The following is a list of Unions belonging to the Federation of Unions, as of the end of November:

Electrical Company Workers' Union
Carpenters' Union
Typesetters' Union
Wood Polishers' Union
Cooks' Union
Masons' Union.

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